

**§ 1.85-1 Unemployment compensation.**

(a) *Introduction.* Section 85 prescribes rules relating to the inclusion in gross income of unemployment compensation (as defined in paragraph (b)(1) of this section) paid in taxable years beginning after December 31, 1978, pursuant to governmental programs. In general, these rules provide that unemployment compensation paid pursuant to governmental programs is includible in the gross income of a taxpayer if the taxpayer's modified adjusted gross income (as defined in paragraph (b)(2) of this section) exceeds a statutory base amount (as defined in paragraph (b)(3) of this section). If there is such an excess, however, the amount included in gross income is limited under paragraph (c)(1) of this section to the lesser of one-half of such excess or the amount of the unemployment compensation. If such taxpayer's modified adjusted gross income does not exceed the applicable statutory base amount, none of the unemployment compensation is included in the taxpayer's gross income.

(b) *Definitions*—(1) *Unemployment compensation*—(i) *General rule.* Except as provided in paragraph (b)(1)(iii) of this section, the term “unemployment compensation” means any amount received under a law of the United States, or of a State, which is in the nature of unemployment compensation. Thus, section 85 applies only to unemployment compensation paid pursuant to governmental programs and does not apply to amounts paid pursuant to private nongovernmental unemployment compensation plans (which are includible in income without regard to section 85). Generally, unemployment compensation programs are those designed to protect taxpayers against the loss of income caused by involuntary layoff. Ordinarily, unemployment compensation is paid in cash and on a periodic basis. The amount of the payments is usually computed in accordance with formula based on the taxpayer's length of prior employment and wages. Such payments, however, may be made in a lump sum or other than in cash or on some other basis.

(ii) *Disability and worker's compensation payments.* Amounts in the nature of unemployment compensation also

include cash disability payments made pursuant to a governmental program as a substitute for case unemployment payments to an unemployed taxpayer who is ineligible for such payments solely because of the disability. Usually these disability payments are paid in the same weekly amount and for the same period as the unemployment compensation benefits to which the unemployed taxpayer otherwise would have been entitled. Amounts received under workmen's compensation acts as compensation for personal injuries or sickness are not amounts in the nature of unemployment compensation. See section 104(a)(1) relating to the exclusion from gross income of such amounts.

(iii) *Employee contributions to a governmental plan.* If a governmental unemployment compensation program is funded in part by an employee's contribution which is not deductible by the employee, an amount paid to such employee under the program is not to be considered unemployment compensation until an amount equal to the total nondeductible contributions paid by the employee to such program has been paid to such employee.

(iv) *Examples of governmental unemployment compensation programs.* Governmental unemployment compensation programs include (but are not limited to) programs established under:

(A) A State law approved by the Secretary of Labor pursuant to section 3304 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

(B) Chapter 85 of title 5, United States Code, relating to unemployment compensation for Federal employees generally and for ex-servicemen.

(C) Trade Act of 1974, sections 231 and 232 (19 U.S.C. 2291 and 2292).

(D) Disaster Relief Act of 1974, section 407 (42 U.S.C. 5177).

(E) The Airline Deregulation Act of 1978 (49 U.S.C. 1552(b)).

(F) The Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act, section 2 (45 U.S.C. 352).

(2) *Modified adjusted gross income.* The term “modified adjusted gross income” means the sum of the following amounts:

(i) Adjusted gross income (as defined in section 62);

(ii) All disability payments of the type that are eligible for exclusion from gross income under section 105(d); and

(iii) All amounts of unemployment compensation (as defined in paragraph (b)(1) of this section).

(3) *Base amount.* The term “base amount” means—

(i) \$25,000 in the case of a joint return under section 6013.

(ii) Zero in the case of a taxpayer who—

(A) Is married (within the meaning of section 143) at the close of the taxable year,

(B) Does not file a joint return for such taxable year, and

(C) Does not live apart (as defined in paragraph (b)(4) of this section) from his or her spouse at all times during the taxable year.

(iii) \$20,000 in the case of all other taxpayers.

(4) *Living apart.* A taxpayer does not “live apart” from his or her spouse at all times during a taxable year if for any period during the taxable year the taxpayer is a member of the same household as such taxpayer’s spouse. A taxpayer is a member of a household for any period, including temporary absences due to special circumstances, during which the household is the taxpayer’s place of abode. A temporary absence due to special circumstances includes a nonpermanent absence caused by illness, education, business, vacation, or military service.

(c) *Limitations—(1) General rule.* If for a taxable year, a taxpayer’s modified adjusted gross income does not exceed the applicable statutory base amount, no amount of unemployment compensation is included in gross income for the taxable year. If there is such an excess, the taxpayer includes in gross income for the taxable year the lesser of the following:

(i) One-half of the excess of the taxpayer’s modified adjusted gross income over such taxpayer’s base amount, or

(ii) The amount of unemployment compensation.

(2) *Exception for fraudulently received unemployment compensation.* If a taxpayer fraudulently receives unemployment compensation under any governmental unemployment compensation

program, then the entire amount of such fraudulently received unemployment compensation must be included in the taxpayer’s gross income for the taxable year in which the benefits were received. Thus, the limitation in section 85 and in paragraph (c)(1) of this section, does not apply to such amounts.

(3) *Examples.* The application of this paragraph may be illustrated by the following examples:

*Example (1).* H and W are married taxpayers who for calendar year 1979 file a joint income tax return. During 1979 H receives \$4,500 of disability income that is eligible for an exclusion under section 105(d). W works for part of 1979 and receives \$20,000 as compensation and also receives \$5,000 of unemployment compensation in 1979. Assume that H and W’s adjusted gross income is \$20,000. The modified adjusted gross income of H and W is \$29,500 (\$4,500 + \$20,000 + \$5,000). Since their modified adjusted gross income (\$29,500) is greater than their base amount (\$25,000), some of the unemployment compensation received by W must be included in their gross income on their 1979 joint income tax return. Under paragraph (c)(1) of this section, of the \$5,000 which is unemployment compensation, the lesser of \$2,250  $((\$29,500 - \$25,000) \div 2)$  or \$5,000 must be included in their gross income. Thus, \$2,250 of the \$5,000 received by W in 1979 is included in the gross income of H and W on their joint income tax return for 1979.

*Example (2).* Assume the same facts in example (1) except H received \$5,000 of disability income that is eligible for an exclusion under section 105(d) and W receives \$28,000 as compensation, and \$4,000 which is unemployment compensation. Assume that H and W’s adjusted gross income is \$28,000. The modified adjusted gross income of H and W is \$37,000 (\$4,000 + \$28,000 + \$5,000). Since their modified adjusted gross income (\$37,000) is greater than their base amount (\$25,000), all of the unemployment compensation received by W must be included in their gross income on their 1979 joint income tax return. Under paragraph (c)(1) of this section, of the \$4,000 which is unemployment compensation, the lesser of \$6,000  $((\$37,000 - \$25,000) \div 2)$  or \$4,000 must be included in their gross income. Thus, all of the \$4,000 unemployment compensation received by W is included in the gross income of H and W on their joint income tax return for 1979.

(d) *Cross reference.* See section 6050B, relating to the requirement that every person who makes payments of unemployment compensation aggregating \$10 or more to any individual during

any calendar year file an information return with the Internal Revenue Service.

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**§ 1.88-1 Nuclear decommissioning costs.**

(a) *In general.* Section 88 provides that the amount of nuclear decommissioning costs directly or indirectly charged to the customers of a taxpayer that is engaged in the furnishing or sale of electric energy generated by a nuclear power plant must be included in the gross income of such taxpayer in the same manner as amounts charged for electric energy. For this purpose, decommissioning costs directly or indirectly charged to the customers of a taxpayer include all decommissioning costs that consumers are liable to pay by reason of electric energy furnished by the taxpayer during the taxable year, whether payable to the taxpayer, a trust, State government, or other entity, and even though the taxpayer may not control the investment or current expenditure of the amount and the amount may not be paid to the taxpayer at the time decommissioning costs are incurred. However, decommissioning costs payable to a taxpayer holding a qualified leasehold interest (as described in paragraph (b)(2)(ii) of § 1.468A-1) are included in the gross income of such taxpayer, and not in the gross income of the lessor.

(b) *Examples.* The following examples illustrate the application of the principles of paragraph (a) of this section:

*Example (1).* X corporation, an accrual method taxpayer engaged in the sale of electric energy generated by a nuclear power plant owned by X, is authorized by the public utility commission of State A to collect nuclear decommissioning costs from ratepayers residing in State A. With respect to the sale of electric energy, X includes in income amounts that have been billed to customers as well as estimated unbilled amounts that relate to energy provided by X after the previous billing but before the end of the taxable year ("accrued unbilled amounts"). The decommissioning costs are included in the monthly bills provided by X to its ratepayers and the entire amount billed is remitted directly to X. Under paragraph (a) of this section, the decommissioning costs must be included in the gross income of X in the same

manner as amounts charged for electric energy (*i.e.*, by including in income decommissioning costs that relate to amounts billed as well as decommissioning costs that relate to accrued unbilled amounts). The same rule would apply if the decommissioning costs charged to ratepayers were separately billed and the amounts billed were remitted to State A to be held in trust for the purpose of decommissioning the nuclear power plant owned by X. In that case, X must include in gross income decommissioning costs that relate to amounts billed as well as decommissioning costs that relate to accrued unbilled amounts.

*Example (2).* Assume the same facts as in Example (1), except that X and M, a municipality located in State A, have entered into a life-of-unit contract pursuant to which (i) M is entitled to 20 percent of the electric energy generated by the nuclear power plant owned by X, and (ii) M is obligated to pay 20 percent of the plant operating costs, including decommissioning costs, incurred by X. Under paragraph (a) of this section, the decommissioning costs that relate to electric energy consumed or distributed by M during any taxable year must be included in the gross income of X for such taxable year. The result contained in this example would be the same if M was a State or an agency or instrumentality of a State or a political subdivision thereof.

(c) *Cross reference.* For special rules relating to the deduction for amounts paid to a nuclear decommissioning fund, see § 1.468A-1 through § 1.468A-5, 1.468A-7, 1.468A-8.

(d) *Effective date.* (1) Section 88 and this section apply to nuclear decommissioning costs directly or indirectly charged to the customers of a taxpayer on or after July 18, 1984, and with respect to taxable years ending on or after such date.

(2) If the amount of nuclear decommissioning costs directly or indirectly charged to the customers of a taxpayer before July 18, 1984, was includible in gross income in a different manner than amounts charged for electric energy, such amount must be included in gross income for the taxable year in which includible in gross income under the method of accounting of the taxpayer that was in effect when such amount was charged to customers.

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